

### AMENDMENTS TO SPECIFICATION

#### In the Specification:

Please amend the Paragraph starting at page 3, line 24 as follows:

Exemplary elastomers include, without limitation natural rubber, styrene-butadiene rubber, polyisoprene, polyisobutylene, polybutadiene, isoprene-butadiene copolymer, neoprene, butyl rubber, polysulfide elastomer, acrylic elastomer, acrylonitrile elastomers, silicone rubber, polysiloxanes, polyester rubber, diisocyanate-linked condensation elastomer, EPDM (ethylene-propylene diene rubbers), chlorosulphonated polyethylene, fluorinated hydrocarbons and the like. In one embodiment, recycled tire rubber is employed. According to one preferred embodiment, the elastomeric component is partially or substantially entirely composed of a nitrile rubber (e.g., a butadiene butyl nitrile rubber). If such a nitrile rubber is employed, the rubber preferably includes between about 10 % or less and about 50 % or more by weight nitrile, more preferably between about 20 % and about 40 % by weight nitrile and even more preferably between about 25 % and about 35 % by weight nitrile.

Please amend the Paragraph starting at page 4, line 4 as follows:

The elastomeric component is preferably composed at least partially or substantially entirely of a relatively low mooney viscosity elastomer. Preferably, the elastomeric component has a mooney viscosity of between about 10 or less and about 50 or greater, more preferably between about 15 and about 40 and even more preferably between about 22 and about 35 at a temperature of 100°C. In a preferred embodiment, the elastomeric component includes one or more carboxyl groups (e.g., carboxylic acid groups) such as a carboxyl-terminated elastomer. The elastomeric component typically includes ~~may also include~~ pendant carboxy or carboxyl groups. In such an embodiment the elastomeric component preferably has a carboxyl content of between about 0.005 equivalents per hundred rubber (EPHR)

or less and about 0.4 EPHR or greater, more preferably between about 0.01 EPHR and about 0.2 EPHR and even more preferably between about 0.05 EPHR and about 0.1 EPHR.

Please amend the Paragraph starting at page 2, line 28 as follows:

The epoxy may be aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, aromatic or the like. The epoxy may include an ethylene copolymer or terpolymer that may possess an alpha-olefin. As a copolymer or terpolymer, the polymer is composed of two or three different monomers, i.e., small molecules with high chemical reactivity that are capable of linking up with similar molecules. One exemplary epoxy resin may be a phenolic resin, ~~which may be a~~ and/or a novalac type or other type resin. Other preferred epoxy containing materials may include a bisphenol-A epichlorohydrin ether polymer, a solid bisphenol-A epoxy resin, an epoxidized bisphenol F epichlorohydrin ether polymer, a creosol or novalac type epichlorohydrin ether polymer, a combination thereof or the like.